



Dear Friends,

Over recent years, our Church has been engaged in a profound journey of renewal and reflection through the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia and the Synod on Synodality, as well as in our diocese, the Diocesan Assembly. These experiences have invited us to deepen our understanding of what it means to be God's people journeying together, attentive to one another, open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and centred on the mission of Christ.

Establishing a Diocesan Pastoral Council marks an important milestone in the life of our diocese. It reflects our shared commitment to fostering a culture of prayerful discernment, collaboration and participation in the mission entrusted to us by Christ.



The Council will provide a vital forum through which the voices, experiences and gifts of the faithful can contribute to the ongoing discernment of our local Church. Together, we seek to recognise where the Spirit is leading us and how we may respond faithfully to the challenges and opportunities of our time. "Seeing the Holy Spirit as a 'wild goose', moving in our lives in unexpected ways, with a tendency to disrupt and surprise."

This vision calls us into a deeper communion, where diversity of gifts becomes a source of strength and where every person has a role to play in advancing the Gospel. It reminds us that the Church flourishes when all the baptised are encouraged to share their wisdom, talents, and experiences in service to the wider community.

The strength of the Diocesan Pastoral Council will depend upon the wisdom, faith and commitment of those who are willing to serve. We need people from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and communities who are passionate about the life and mission of the Church. Whether you bring experience in parish leadership, ministry, professional life, or simply a deep love for the Church and a desire to contribute, your voice and insights can help shape the future direction of our diocese.

I invite members of our diocese to prayerfully discern whether God may be calling them to serve on the Diocesan Pastoral Council. Such service is a generous response to the needs of the Church, requiring attentive listening, thoughtful reflection, and a genuine desire to seek God's will for our future together.

As we begin this new chapter, let us entrust the work of the Council to the Holy Spirit. May it strengthen our unity, deepen our faith and help us become an ever more vibrant and missionary Church, walking together in hope, guided by the Holy Spirit, and committed to building up the Body of Christ.

With every blessing,

Bishop Mark Freeman